

## Sommer sisters step up for Lions

Written by Mike Condon

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It was a hot Sommer night Tuesday in the Linn-Mar gym with the outside temperature sitting in the teens.

With the Lions trailing 38-37 entering the final quarter of their season-opener against Keokuk, the Sommer twins took over. They combined to score 13 of the Lions' 17 points in the period, and were part of a stifling defense that resulted in a 54-45 victory at the Linn-Mar gym.

"It's like it's that twin thing," said Linn-Mar girls basketball coach Michael Brandt of senior guards Kristie and Katie Sommer. "They just seemed to know when we needed them to turn it on."

The twin sisters, in their first season with the Lions after transferring from Dubuque Senior, had been in the same position many times before while playing for the Rams. Brandt admitted it was comforting to see the sisters step up.

"It was great on their part to be able to do that," Brandt said. "We had a lot of great efforts down the stretch. We rebounded well, took care of the ball and executed down the stretch, something we didn't do in the first half."

And another thing they didn't do in the middle two quarters was identify hot-shooting Lakyn Boltz. She connected on four 3-point baskets, including one early in the third quarter that was part of a 7-0 run to give the Lady Chiefs a 33-27 lead.

"We didn't do a very good job on her early," Brandt said. "We did a much better job on her later in the game and she wasn't able to get many open looks."

Not surprisingly, it was Kristie Sommer who was given the task of slowing down Boltz.

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"I just wanted to get up on her and make it difficult for her to get a shot off," Kristie said. "I was able to do that, but I got a lot of help from my teammates."

The Lions clawed their way back within one at the end of the quarter. Katie Sommer said the team was confident entering the fourth period.

"Our mindset was to work as a team," she said. "We wanted to get our chemistry going, work for the lay-ups and work for the open shots."

Several of the open shots came on back door cuts from Katie who took long feeds from Kristie to scores, twice drawing fouls on the visitors as well. Brandt said some of that is part of the offense, but admitted that a lot of it has to do with the girls knowing each other so well.

"They have been playing together for so long, one just knows where the other is going to be," he said. "You can coach a lot of things, but you can't really coach that."

Kristie Sommer said it is "twin telepathy" that makes it work.

"We see each other well on the court," she said. "We work together well because we always know where the other is going to be on the court. "

Katie Sommer's free throw with 5:14 remaining put the Lions up 42-41 and her basket off a long feed from her sister bumped the lead to 44-41 and Linn-Mar was never headed the rest of the way.

Katie Sommer led the Lions with 16 points, Kristie added 14 while Olivia Montague chipped in with 9. Center Aryn Jones, contributed 11 rebounds.

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Boltz and Trinity Jeffers led the Lady Chiefs with 12 and 10 points, respectively.

“We need to put on the pressure for all four quarters that we did in the fourth quarter tonight,” Brandt said. “We know we have a lot of things to work on, but this was a good way to start the season.”

KEOKUK (45): Brooke Wade 1 0-0 2; Lakyn Boltz 4 0-0 12, Kelsey Walters 3 0-0 6, Trinity Jeffers 5 0-0 10, Paige Kayvan 1 4-4 6, Makenzie Pezley 2 0-0 4, Alyssa Wessel 2 0-0 5. Totals 18 4-4 45.

LINN-MAR (54): Kristie Sommer 5 2-2 14, Katie Sommer 4 7-8 16, Aryn Jones 2 0-0 4; Olivia Montague 4 0-2 9; Nikita Sharma 1 4-4 6; Taylor Robertson 1 0-0 3; Emily Makinster 1 0-0 2; Brittney Lancial 0 0-0 0; Claire Larson 0 0-0 0. Totals 18 13-16 54.

Keokuk	8	18	12	7 – 45
Linn-Mar	14	13	10	17 – 54

3-point goals: Keokuk 5 (Boltz 4, Wessel); Linn-Mar 5 (Kr. Sommer 2, Ka. Sommer, Robertson, Montague). Total fouls: Keokuk 14, Linn-Mar 14. Fouled out: none. Turnovers: Keokuk 21, Linn-Mar 19. Technical fouls: none